

preserving victims' remains so they can be buried according to Jewish law, and helping family members cope with the tragedy.

ZAKA volunteers are widely recognized and respected throughout Israel for their devotion to the difficult duties they perform. During 2007, they participated in more than 18,000 life-saving or search-and-rescue incidents. More than 2,000 times they were involved in activities to honor the dead after fatal accidents or attacks. Because of their professionalism, they have forged close working relationships with police and other emergency responders.

ZAKA has also expanded its work to respond to accidents and catastrophes around the world. They helped identify Jewish victims of the deadly Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami in 2004 in Thailand, Sri Lanka, India, and Indonesia. They helped return the remains of victims of plane crashes in Russia and Namibia. They helped save 2,000-year-old Jewish catacombs in Italy. And they helped rescue and preserve sacred Jewish Torahs in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina.

I had the privilege of speaking at a lunch last week here in Washington honoring ZAKA and its founder, Yehuda Meshi Zahav. ZAKA's motto is "Saving those who can be saved, and honoring those who cannot." They live up to this motto every day. I ask all of my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to this great organization, and to the many volunteers who give selflessly of their time to help those in need in Israel and around the world.

TRIBUTE TO GAYLE O. AVERYT

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Mr. CLYBURN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a tremendous business and civic leader and a great friend. Mr. Gayle Averyt is being honored on October 1st for accomplishing an extraordinary feat—50 years of service to the same employer—Colonial Life & Accident Insurance Company.

After earning a bachelor's degree from Davidson College and an MBA from Harvard Business School, Gayle joined the staff of Colonial in 1958 at the age of 25. He rose through the ranks at Colonial, proving himself a very capable and collegial businessman. By 1970, he became Chairman of the Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer at a youthful 37 years of age. He held those positions for 23 years, until assuming the title of Chairman Emeritus of Colonial Life in 1993. That was the same year Colonial merged with UNUM Corporation of Portland, Maine, and he served on UNUM Corporation's Board of Directors from 1993–1999.

Gayle is a former member of the Board of Directors of the Health Insurance Association of America and served as Secretary of the South Carolina Insurance Commission. He also served on the Board of NationsBank, a board member of the National Association (Carolinas) from 1992–1995 and as a member of the Board of Directors of the South Carolina Ports Authority from 1995–1999.

Despite his hectic career, Gayle believed in his community and sought opportunities to

give back. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the Foundation for Columbia's Future and is a former member of the Executive Committee (1979–1995) and Vice President (1988–1995) of the South Carolina State Fair Association. He has been a trustee of the University of South Carolina Business Partnership Foundation and is past president of the University of South Carolina Research and Development Foundation, having served as a Trustee of the Foundation from 1980–1991. He is past president of the University of South Carolina Orchestra Association and served on the board of the Cultural Council of Richland and Lexington Counties.

Gayle has been awarded numerous recognitions. In 1989, the South Carolina State Chamber of Commerce recognized him as South Carolina Businessman of the Year. The University of South Carolina awarded him the honorary degree of Doctor of Public Service that same year. He received Distinguished Service Awards from USC and from the Moore School of Business at USC in 1993 and 2006 respectively. In 1994, he received the Order of the Palmetto, which is the highest civic honor awarded by the Governor to individual citizens for outstanding service to the state. Four years later, he was inducted into the South Carolina Business Hall of Fame.

While Gayle has been a lifelong Republican who has been very active in numerous political campaigns, he has been a very ardent support of me and my political efforts. I am proud to call him a dear friend.

Gayle is married to the former Margaret "Peg" Finlay, and the two have three daughters, Caroline, Margaret, and Elinor. They are very active members of Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Columbia.

Madam Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating Gayle Averyt for a remarkable career at Colonial Life & Accident and a lifetime of dedication to his community. He is a man of honor and integrity. I applaud his many contributions, and extend my best wishes and Godspeed on this tremendous occasion.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE PASSING OF STAFF SERGEANT DARRIS JULIUS DAWSON UNITED STATES ARMY

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I rise today to honor the sacrifice of Staff Sergeant Darris Julius Dawson. On September 14, 2008, while serving his third tour in Iraq, Staff Sergeant Dawson was killed in the line of duty in Tunnis, Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Staff Sergeant Dawson joined the United States Army shortly after graduating from Escambia High School in Pensacola, Florida. Darris re-enlisted twice and was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart, Georgia.

Madam Speaker, the Northwest Florida community is proud of his service, and we offer our sincere condolences to his wife, four

children, family and friends as they mourn their loss of this fine man. On behalf of the United States Congress and a grateful Nation, I am humbled to recognize his dedication and love for our country. May God continue to bless Darris and all of the men and women in uniform who protect our freedom, and may God continue to bless America.

HONORING THE SERVICE AND HARD WORK OF EDWARD JOHNSON

HON. JOHN BOOZMAN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Edward Johnson, Arkansas' 2008 Outstanding Older Worker of the Year.

His commitment and dedication to establishing employment opportunities for Americans who are beyond the traditional retirement age has helped play a vital role in Arkansas' economy.

There is no one more deserving of this recognition. Mr. Johnson loves to see the excitement on a veteran's face when he or she gets a good job.

He continues to lead a life of service he started when he joined the Army in 1948. Serving tours in Japan, Korea, Panama, and Vietnam and earning numerous medals he hasn't retired from helping his neighbors.

Following his military career, Mr. Johnson became the Workforce Services Veterans representative for areas in the third district, a position he has held for 30 years.

Married to his lovely wife, Louise, he has taught the importance of being involved in the community to three children and seven grandchildren.

Mr. Johnson remains active with the chamber of commerce and he enjoys the company of his family and friends.

I congratulate Mr. Johnson and thank him for his service.

CELEBRATING OXI DAY

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise to join Hellenic-Americans and Philhellenes everywhere to celebrate "OXI Day (No Day)," which falls on the 28th of October. This year marks the 68th anniversary of a very important day in Hellenic history, the day on which brave Greek patriots said "No" to fascism, "No" to injustice, and "No" to slavery. For those individuals who lived through that momentous period and their descendants, many of whom live in the 14th Congressional District of New York, "OXI Day" is more than a memory: it is the embodiment of Hellenism and its highest ideals.

At dawn on October 28, 1940, General Ionnas Metaxas was confronted with an ultimatum. An Italian ambassador delivered a message directly from General Mussolini demanding that Greece allow Axis forces to enter Greek territory and occupy certain unspecified "strategic locations" or face war.